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Editorial

IN the July-September issue of the *Church Quarterly Review*[1] the Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford proposed some striking reforms in the theological training of the clergy. His proposals have to do not with the minority of clergymen who are qualified and called to become specialist theologians, but with the majority who need to have a competent understanding of Christian doctrine analogous to that which a general practitioner in medicine is supposed to have of his subject—in other words, who need to be able to follow and profit by what is of practical importance in the work of expert theologians without expecting to become experts themselves. The ordinary ordinand needs to acquire at his theological college not so much the kind of examinable knowledge that is required for university degrees as a grounding in theology which will inspire him with a determination to go on studying it for the rest of his life and will enable him to know where to turn for the various kinds of information upon which he ought to be able to lay his hand.

Dr Hodgson maintains that, if the giving of that kind of grounding is what theological colleges ought to aim at, it is a corollary that the General Ordination Examination (G.O.E.) should be abolished. He acknowledges that in its time G.O.E. served a useful purpose, in so far as it corrected the dangerously haphazard conditions of testing candidates' fitness that previously existed and established the idea of a common standard. But now it defeats its proper purpose. It imposes upon the staffs of theological colleges the task of trying to insert and retain in the minds of students far too many pieces of information, instead of leaving to each college the responsibility of arousing in its members a lively interest in theology which is likely to endure. And it makes it inevitable that ordinands during their two years at a theological college are all the time labouring under the prospect of an impending examination with a consequent sense of constraint and tendency towards cramming.

It is not of course suggested that there should be no final test of a man's intellectual fitness for ordination. Dr Hodgson proposes an alternative to G.O.E. into the details of which we cannot enter here —which indeed he does not claim yet to have elaborated. Broadly speaking, his proposition is that the staffs of theological colleges should be trusted to certify whether or not a candidate has made the grade. At the same time, a check would be provided by requiring that a certain number of each student's essays be sent towards the end of his course to an external examiner who would subsequently visit the college and discuss with him his work. The examiner would then either countersign or query the award of the college certificate.

[1] "The Training of the Clergy", by Leonard Hodgson, pp. 282–91.

A further corollary, according to Dr Hodgson, is that, if G.O.E. were abolished and his alternative suggestion were followed, the standard length of a theological college course could be reduced from two years to eighteen months, and so a very considerable financial economy be effected. It seems to us, however, that at present this should be regarded as a secondary question, and the proposed abolition of, and substitute for, G.O.E. should first be considered on its merits. There is a good *prima facie* case for what Dr Hodgson proposes, though it needs to be weighed alongside what the Archdeacon of Durham says in the article that appears below. The present writer has, for some years now, in the training of middle-aged ordination candidates been following a method which closely resembles that favoured by Dr Hodgson. Nothing would induce him to exchange the comparative liberty and spontaneity of this method for an examination-dominated system.

Interpreting the Fourth Gospel

In the interpretation of an ancient text it is necessary to consider not only what words the original manuscript contained but also the exact sense, including the associations and overtones, which attached to the words for the author and his original readers. That in turn demands a knowledge of the religious and cultural context in which the work was composed, the character of the audience for whom it was intended, and, to some extent at least, the purpose for which it was written. In the case of the Fourth Gospel this raises a difficult problem, for we have virtually no trustworthy external evidence relating to such questions. Accordingly, as the history of Johannine scholarship shows, there has been a twofold temptation. Either to label the author in some way—as "allegorist" or "symbolist" or "mystic" or "gnostic" or what you will—on the basis of certain arbitrarily selected passages and then to foist a corresponding interpretation on the rest of the Gospel. Or else (and this was a temptation which even Hoskyns did not altogether escape) to try to by-pass the problem, interpreting the author's words without discovering exactly the context of discourse in which he used them, or even assuming that there is a New Testament context of discourse which is the same for all the writers, so that the meaning of words for the Fourth Evangelist can be determined from their meaning for other New Testament writers.

This problem is the starting point of Dr Dodd's new book, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*.[1] He freely admits its great difficulty, for the right thought-forms for the interpretation of the text can be derived only from the text itself and yet they are needed for the proper understanding of the text. But as a result of isolating the problem and facing it squarely he is able to put forward a method for solving it, a method which is in fact one of the major contributions of his book.

[1] Pp. xii + 478. Cambridge University Press. 42s.

The Fourth Evangelist was, as Hoskyns so constantly insisted, a member of the early Church and therefore the language of the early Church, and particularly of the synoptic material, will have been a very important factor in determining his use of terms. But the Johannine problem is largely constituted by the fact that early Christian language as known to us from other sources will *not* completely explain the Fourth Evangelist's language; he was an early Christian with a difference. To understand that difference and its origin and intentions would take us a long way towards understanding the Fourth Gospel.

As well as being a Christian the Fourth Evangelist was a first, or early second, century man of the Mediterranean world and so, humanly speaking, the context of discourse in which he wrote, so far as it was not derived from the primitive Christian tradition, must have been derived from other religious and philosophical systems current in the Mediterranean world of that time. Professor Dodd therefore devotes the first section of his book (pp. 3–130) to a fairly detailed examination of such systems, both Jewish and Gentile, and a comparison of them with the language of the Fourth Gospel. The higher religion of Hellenism, particularly as exemplified in the Hermetic writings, Hellenistic and Rabbinic Judaism, Gnosticism and Mandaism are all brought under masterly review and their tenets and general atmosphere expounded with a wealth of supporting quotation. The language and ideas of each are compared with those of the Fourth Gospel, with results which are best set out in Professor Dodd's own words: "While the evangelist stands within the general environment of primitive Christianity, and may have been in some measure influenced by Paul, he also shows affinities with certain tendencies in non-Christian thought. He is well aware of the teaching of Rabbinic Judaism, but only partly sympathetic to it. He is more sympathetically in touch with Hellenistic Judaism as represented by Philo. Like Philo himself, he is in contact with the higher pagan thought of the time, as represented to us by the Hermetic literature. 'Gnosticism' has in part the same roots as Johannine Christianity, and serves in some measure to illustrate Johannine conceptions, but more by contrast than affinity. Mandaism turns out to be too late in date to be of any direct importance for our investigation, though in so far as it retains elements of earlier Gnosticism it may afford some illustrative parallels. Rabbinic Judaism, Philo and the *Hermetica* remain our most direct sources for the background of thought . . ." (p. 133).

The next step is to see what the language of the Fourth Gospel means if these were indeed the contexts from which its meaning and associations were derived; and to this task Professor Dodd devotes the second main section of his book (pp. 133–285). The problem is not as easy as perhaps it sounds. It is not just a matter of examining the Fourth Evangelist's use of a particular phrase and then saying that since its use has close affinities with its use in one or more contemporary religious systems, they will give us the context of discourse

in which the Johannine use is properly understood. That short cut was the error of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*. In the case of a writer who believed, as the Fourth Evangelist did, that he was dealing with unique events, we must expect a use of terms which has no precise parallel elsewhere. This unparalleled use of terms we must accept; but how are we to understand it? By recognizing that even a unique use of terms rests on previous usage. A writer chooses such and such a word or phrase to express his unprecedented meaning because something in its previous use makes it specially suitable for his purpose, and we shall not fully understand his new usage of it unless we know just what it was in its previous usage that made him choose it. If we understand why just *that* word seemed to him the right one to take and twist to his new meaning, we shall be some way toward understanding what precisely that new meaning was. And then, to complete our task, we shall have to rely on a careful examination and comparison of the author's own use of the word in various contexts. This is precisely what Professor Dodd does for eleven of the key-concepts of Johannine thought, concepts such as eternal life, knowledge of God, Son of Man, and *Logos*. In each case he examines and compares all the uses of the phrase in the Gospel, keeping an eye all the time on the associations it seems to have had for the Evangelist, whether derived from Greek, Jewish, or previous Christian usage. It is impossible to summarize so much acuteness and detailed learning; if we could wish for fuller treatment and the discussion of more of the Johannine phrases, we can at least be grateful for such masterly guidance in the method we must follow for ourselves. One thing stands out; the examination of Greek religious ideas in the first section of the book pays rich dividends in this second section. Professor Dodd is no blind Hellenist in his interpretations, but again and again it becomes clear that to ignore the Greek background of the Johannine words is to miss a great deal of what the Evangelist meant by them. For example, in the case of the word "truth" and its cognates it becomes clear that some appreciation of the distinction derived ultimately from Plato, between the "real" world of transcendent and eternal being and the "unreal" world of "coming-to-be-and-passing-away" in which we live is indispensable to a full understanding of Johannine usage. Of one expression Dr Dodd writes: "While the mould of the expression is determined by Hebrew usage, the actual sense of the words must be determined by Greek usage." In that the expression is typical of many others.[1]

But a Gospel, as modern scholarship increasingly insists, conveys its good news not only by the words it uses and the way it uses them but by the order and arrangement of its material. For a full appreciation, its structure must be taken seriously as well as its vocabulary.

[1] Lest Professor Dodd should be misrepresented it may be well to repeat that he does full justice to the Jewish and early Christian backgrounds of Johannine thought as well. The Greek background has been emphasized because there has been some tendency in England recently to underestimate its importance.

And so Professor Dodd's work is not done when he has defined the chief concepts with which the Fourth Evangelist works. In his last section (pp. 289–443) he examines in detail the structure of the Gospel as a whole and traces the argument that structure reflects. This is perhaps the part of the book to which the ordinary reader will turn first and which he will consult most frequently. It is so detailed as to amount almost to an outline commentary.

Setting to work with the hypothesis that the present order of the text is the original one, Professor Dodd has found it amply confirmed; in their present order, as he shows, the various incidents form an intelligible pattern and convey a coherent message. Professor Dodd finds three main divisions in the Gospel. First there is the Proem, which occupies the whole of chapter 1 and consists of the Prologue (1. 1–18) and the subsequent Testimony (1. 19–51). Chapters 2-12 Professor Dodd calls the Book of Signs; it consists, he holds, of seven episodes, each consisting of one or more narratives of significant acts of Jesus accompanied by discourse material designed to bring out the significance of the narrative. This section ends with an epilogue and is followed by a division which corresponds to the break before the Passion narrative in the other Gospels but is more formal and definite, virtually dividing the Gospel into two books. The third section, which ended originally at 20. 31, Professor Dodd calls the Book of the Passion, and he distinguishes within it the Farewell Discourses and the Passion Narrative proper.

A section such as this is particularly hard to summarize. To the present writer Professor Dodd's discussion of the Farewell Discourses seemed particularly illuminating and also his tracing of the great themes—life, light, judgment, the passion and glory of Christ—through the Book of Signs. He shows how each of the seven episodes sets out some great theme, the discourse making clear the meaning implicit in the event narrated and the precise meaning of the discourse being determined by the narrative—a unity of act and word which is fundamental to Johannine thought. And he further demonstrates how the Evangelist has woven the separate episodes together into a single organic whole so that the meaning of any episode can be fully grasped only when it is seen in its context in the whole. In this connexion the appendices or epilogues which link the various episodes are of great importance. But even this is not the whole truth about the Book of Signs, for the signs of which it is composed presuppose for their truth that death and resurrection to which the Book frequently points forward but which it does not itself describe. Here again it will be best to quote Professor Dodd himself: "It [*sc.* the Book of Signs] does not move along the direct line of a logical process. Its movement is more like that of a musical fugue. A theme is introduced and developed up to a point; then a second theme is introduced and the two are interwoven; then a third, and so on. A theme may be dropped, and later resumed and differently combined, in all manner of harmonious variations . . . Each [theme] is enunciated and exemplified in various ways, and by the end of chapter 12 they have all been brought into a unified presentation of the whole

truth about Christ and his work; the whole truth, for although the story of his death and resurrection remains to be told . . . yet in principle the Christ of the Book of Signs is the Christ who dies and rises again; and this truth about him is the essential presupposition of the whole picture of his ministry. The works of Christ are all 'signs' of his finished work. The 'signs' are all true, provided that he who works them is the Son of Man who was exalted and glorified through the cross. In that sense, each several act of Christ contains within it the whole truth of the Gospel, and should disclose this truth if it is sufficiently pondered and probed. This conception of the purport of the story of the ministry has determined the structure of the Book of Signs" (p. 383).

No book can hope to satisfy all its readers at every point. Some may feel dissatisfied with Professor Dodd's discussion of Mandaism even though they agree with his conclusion that it has little importance for the study of St John. Others may feel that in his treatment of the Book of Signs he has found a neater arrangement than the author himself was conscious of, or that it would be as plausible to propose an eightfold as a sevenfold division. Others may be doubtful about the handling of Johannine eschatology, and certainly many will find it hard to agree that Lamb of God in the Fourth Gospel is a messianic term with little or no sacrificial significance.

But these are detailed points. A more serious criticism would be that the wealth of scholarship and detail in section one is incommensurable with the use that it is possible to make of it in a book of this size. Such a criticism would be ill-founded. As was hinted above, the danger for Johannine scholarship was either that of paying too little attention to the religious beliefs of the Evangelist's day, as Hoskyns[1] did, or else of paying too much, at any rate to certain aspects of it, as Bultmann and others have done. There was therefore every justification for a full description of the main religious systems of the time, so orientated as to enable us to judge for ourselves their relevance to the Johannine problem. Indeed, by providing such an account and making a tentative essay in the use of it, even if he has made mistakes in detail, Professor Dodd may well have set the feet of Johannine scholarship in a larger and better room.

A further question calls for discussion. If Professor Dodd is right in thinking that Johannine theology is largely independent of St Paul, we are bound to ask about the origin and motives of this attempt to express a basically Jewish gospel in terms intelligible to Greeks. Was the Fourth Evangelist the pioneer in this endeavour? Was it an individual or a community enterprise? Was it consciously or mainly unconsciously carried through? And on what principles did those who attempted it decide that just these were the right categories for the translation of the Jewish Gospel? On all this Professor Dodd has little to say beyond arguing that the Gospel was written mainly for

[1] For all that it is an odd fact that Hoskyns's name does not occur at all in Professor Dodd's index.

non-Christian readers who might be expected to find the Hellenized terminology interesting and at least partly intelligible at first reading, even though they would not of course fully understand the book till they had joined the Christian fold. On this matter Professor Dodd will certainly meet much disagreement; the Gospel seems too instinct with Christian sentiment and allusion, too unintelligible to the non-Christian, to have been intended primarily for non-Christian readers. And if so, what follows? Was there a substantial community of Christians whose mutual discourse and edification was carried on in Hellenized terminology? Who were these people and how came they to have so sure a touch with their Greek Christian language? Professor Dodd has an important appendix on the *historical* relation of the Fourth Gospel to the Synoptists which he promises to expound later into a separate book. May we ask that when he does so he will widen its scope and discuss also the relation of the cultural and religious terms with which the Fourth Evangelist works to those of more primitive Christianity?

D. E. NINEHAM.

Ministerium Verbi Divini[1]

DURING the Michaelmas Term 1952 I turned up by chance a cutting I had kept—an article by Sir Edwyn Hoskyns which had been published in October 1930 in one of the Sunday—or possibly one of the daily—newspapers. The article is entitled "Why there is a Shortage of Clergy". In the course of this article Sir Edwyn Hoskyns made some very pertinent remarks on the subject of the proper training of the clergy. He wrote:

> The prestige of a profession . . . depends upon the existence of a work to be done which requires trained ability.
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> Now, the work of the clergy does require ability, and it does require training. The Church of England can make use of almost any natural ability in its clergy. No single and precise ability is necessary. A particular and especial training is, however, necessary.
>
> It is this need of special training which is now widely denied. A little amateur knowledge of economics or psychology or comparative religion is supposed to be preferable to a strict Biblical and Theological and Pastoral training.
>
> There is no dignity in a profession which is professionally amateur. If there be no theological knowledge which requires for its understanding and interpretation both training and devoted, lifelong, concentrated sympathy with men and women of all classes and types, then the layman can interpret the Scriptures and the Creeds as adequately as a man wholly devoted to their study and interpretation; and if a layman can do this without training, or strain, or struggle, or pastoral responsibility, the Ministry ceases to be a profession worthy of recruiting. . . .
>
> The Bible is authoritative for Christians, and the life of the Church depends primarily upon the Biblical learning of its clergy, who, whatever other duties they have, are set apart for the interpretation of the Scriptures. If the Scriptures are to remain authoritative in any genuine sense of the word, we need a Ministry trained to their interpretation and devoted to their application.

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[1] This article is based on a sermon preached before the University of Oxford on 26 April 1953.

That article seemed to me in no wise to have lost its relevance with the passage of more than two decades. In particular I have recently had evidence that again and again men who offer themselves as candidates for Holy Orders are advised by the parochial clergy with whom they are in touch, by service chaplains, by some members of selection boards, and even sometimes by bishops, to read for their degree some subject other than theology, and to leave the particular study of theology until they arrive at their theological college.

I am certainly not suggesting that all parochial clergy, all chaplains, all selectors, all bishops give this counsel. Many go out of their way to advise the reading of theology. I know, too, that most Deans and Chaplains of Colleges encourage men to read theology in the University, if not during the whole of their time, then in Oxford for a fourth year or at Cambridge for a second part of a Tripos. But while Deans and Chaplains carry great weight in the counsel they give, it happens too frequently that men are put off from reading theology by a parish priest or other counsellor before the candidate comes up to the University at all.

Behind this counsel to read some other subject before beginning the specific study of theology there is in fact a long tradition. We find it present in *A Discourse of the Pastoral Care*, by Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury for more than a quarter of a century. But there we find even more an insistence on familiarity with the New Testament in Greek, a system of Divinity, and competence in the field of apologetics. Behind Burnet there is the *de doctrina christiana* of St Augustine of Hippo, where we find strong counsel that the defenders of Christian truth should be skilled in the art of rhetoric, but an even stronger insistence that

> A man speaks with more or less wisdom, just as he has made more or less progress in the knowledge of the Scriptures; I do not mean by reading them much and committing them to memory, but by understanding them aright and carefully searching into their meaning.

Two points must therefore be made. If the Fathers valued classical learning as a preparation for the study of the Scriptures, they certainly did not value it as a primary means to a Christian education. For learning in the Scriptures themselves there was in their minds no substitute.

And secondly it is important to recognize that not all subjects are equally valuable as a prolegomenon to the study of theology. Under present conditions, what happens only too often, when the study of theology is left until a man arrives at his theological college, is that certain preparatory knowledge is also left—a knowledge of Greek, for example. The tradition of classical learning no longer dominates the education that is given in the public and the grammar schools. The tradition of a knowledge of the text of the English Bible no longer permeates the home. All this preparatory work, as well as the scientific study of the Scriptures, and the study of Systematic and Pastoral Theology is left until a man arrives at his theological college. A burden is put upon the theological colleges for which they lack both the staff to provide the specialized teaching, and even more the time

in which adequately to train men for the priesthood. And by thrusting upon the theological colleges a task for which they were not designed, the theological colleges are being prevented from doing their proper work.

Meanwhile the Universities have, in the Professors and Lecturers in theology, the ablest scholars in their own fields of learning and research. One of the most encouraging signs of the times has been the foundation in this century of chairs of Theology in the Modern Universities from which in the last century the study of theology was deliberately excluded. But a school of theology is not created by the establishment of Professorships and Lectureships alone. There must also be students, and in a great school there must be many students. I was myself so fortunate as to spend a year reading theology in the University of Marburg between the wars. One of the most impressive aspects of that experience was that the students of theology were numbered there in hundreds and not in tens. And it was one group of theologians then dominating the scene who enabled the Church in Germany to take the Confessional stand it did in the German Church Struggle.

It would seem therefore to be wise strategy for the Church in this age to counsel all men seeking Holy Orders to read theology in the University. It would seem to be a particularly dangerous kind of defeatism to counsel them to delay the beginning of their theological studies until they arrive at their theological college. Without students the faculties and departments of theology in the ancient and modern universities will inevitably wither and die, to the great loss of theological scholarship in the Church of God.

All this would be special pleading if it were not desirable for the student himself to read theology in the University wherever possible. To the young candidate for Holy Orders just going up to the University such prolonged study of theology may well appear unnecessary. He believes that he knows what the Christian Gospel is. He believes that he knows the ethic it requires. And in a sense he is probably right. Yet the moment he begins the serious study of theology he will find that much which seemed to him certain has become insecure. He will need to learn critical methods for the sifting of evidence. He will need to discover a new historical perspective. He will pass through periods of intense doubt concerning the validity of the faith he would proclaim. And it will only be through doubt that faith will be reborn in him. Theology, if it is to become a *ministerium verbi divini*, has to be studied existentially. And this requires of him not only knowledge but a personal readjustment. All this takes time. Two years in a theological college may suffice for the passing of the required examinations, but it is not sufficient for this radical personal readjustment. And it is my experience that a year on the study of the Bible followed by a year on Doctrine, Worship, and Pastoralia is totally insufficient for more than a superficial introduction to these great subjects.

But the objection is frequently made that the study of theology is narrowing, whereas the study of other subjects is broadening. This I

believe to be the direct contrary to the truth. I would not hesitate to claim that theology is, potentially if not in fact—and I believe that it is in fact—one of the best means to a liberal education. It involves the study of languages. It involves the study of a great literature. It involves the study of the thought of men whose writings have profoundly influenced subsequent history. It involves the use of a critical technique that is second to none. It involves the study of cultures and civilizations very different from our own. It involves the study of history, archaeology, architecture, art, music, paleography, philosophy. Above all it confronts the student with the problems of man's origin, man's nature and man's destiny, and it does this by confronting him with God. If in fact the theologians have made of theology a school for the training of the clergy, they teach a subject that could become, at least for those who consciously stand in the Christian tradition, and possibly for others, the means to a liberal education in our heritage through the specific study of one of the greatest formative influences in that heritage. Is it really clear that History or P.P.E. provides a better means to a general education for a Christian gentleman?

But at its heart theology is *ministerium verbi divini.* Behind the counsel of some of the older clergy to the young candidate for Holy Orders to delay the study of theology until he arrives at his theological college, there is perhaps the experience that for them theology in their theological college was *ministerium verbi divini,* and theology as studied in the University was not. If these older clergy studied theology in the University in the '20s or earlier, they were perhaps tied down to questions of prolegomenon—textual criticism, the Synoptic Problem, the weighing of historical evidence for the historicity of Jesus. For them the study of theology in the University meant the shattering of a simple faith—as it still must mean—but perhaps the scholars who taught them had little to say to help them towards the rebuilding of the faith that had been shattered. That was the period of the dominance of Theological Liberalism and the radical use of the Religions-geschichtlichemethode. For them it was only in their theological college that they began to find their feet again.

That may be the root of the prejudice against the study of theology in the University. Of course these problems of prolegomenon are still with us. Of course we still have to determine the historical evidence for the events that the Church proclaims as her Gospel. But the centre of interest in theological studies has changed. Sir Edwyn Hoskyns recalled us to the message the New Testament writers were concerned to proclaim. Dr Dodd has insisted that the Kerygma is in the centre of the picture. From that Kerygma most subsequent studies proceed. In Kittel's *Wörterbuch* we have both a method and a tool for determining the precise meaning of the New Testament writers. The commentaries that are being written to-day are theological commentaries, and no longer merely *religionsgeschichtlich.*

This change of emphasis in theological studies in the Universities will, I trust, lead to an increasing desire, on the part of those offering themselves for Holy Orders, for a thorough grounding in theology. It will mean that the ordinand will recognize that it is as essential for him to begin the study of theology as early as possible, as it is for the medical student to begin the study of medicine as early as possible. It will mean that the older clergy, the C.A.C.T.M. secretaries and selectors, and the bishops will require that, whatever subject a student may read in a University, the one subject that he must read is theology. It will mean that where C.A.C.T.M. cannot provide the funds to enable a man to read theology as a second school, it will insist that he read it as a first school. For whatever studies may be desirable in the candidate for the priesthood, the one subject that is essential is a thorough grounding in the study of the Scriptures it will be his life's work to expound.

When all this has been said, it does none the less remain true that the study of theology in the University will not of itself qualify the candidate for Holy Orders to ascend the pulpit and to proclaim the Gospel. There is a concern with prolegomenon and an objectivity in critical study that is right in the University but is inadequate for the Ministry. It is here that we see the true nature of theology as studied in the theological college. There the student studies the Scriptures as a believer who is himself committed and under obedience to the Word he would proclaim. There he submits himself in a new way to the Holy Spirit, that when he comes to preach, his preaching may be "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power".[1]

J. O. Cobham.

Mr T. S. Eliot's "The Confidential Clerk"

(First produced at the Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, during the Festival, 1953.)

Here is a creative work by Mr Eliot that is neither odd nor obscure. Here are human beings and their relationships. Whereas in the *Cocktail Party* Sir Henry Harcourt-Reilly was no mere psychiatrist, the confidential clerk himself really is a clerk, though a very special one, and about this I shall say more later, and it appears to me that there is no character in this new play who is more than he seems. No libations are poured on the table of this financier's office, no Eumenides stand in its windows, and there are no choruses of women of London. This is the straight sort of play which was crystallizing out in the *Cocktail Party*, and, moreover, when one occasionally senses verse, it is without uneasiness.

Mr Eliot has come to terms with us, and is no longer, I felt, putting one over on us, no longer, perhaps, pitching the note higher than we can reach, or, perhaps, leaving so much unsaid that I have

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[1] 1 Cor. 2. 4.

wondered what the *Family Reunion* and the *Cocktail Party* (and the *Waste Land*) were really all about. As far as I can judge from a single performance it is pretty clear what the *Confidential Clerk* is about, and the terms it uses appeal immediately. In this it resembles the Christian literature of François Mauriac or of Graham Greene and not that of Charles Williams. Here is no mystery, and equally no echoing resonances, no footfalls in the mind's less travelled country. Mr Eliot would appear to have his latest pack of cards well and truly on the table.

The Confidential Clerk is a comedy, "classical" in the type of its plot and the economy of it. A financier has, apparently, two illegitimate children. They do not know they are related and fall in love. The financier's wife thinks him mistaken about the identity of one of them, whom she maintains to be her own illegitimate son. The illegitimate daughter eventually marries a third and quite parentless person who is ultimately revealed as the true illegitimate son of the financier's wife, while the young man she had thought the financier mistaken over proves to be the son of neither. Instead he is the son of a woman whom he has till the end of the play known as his aunt, a certain Mrs Guzzard. And around and out of this plot, expertly managed, there is shaped a brilliant comedy of situation, character, and dialogue. It is all very funny, though it is not as exquisite or extravagant as Wilde, for the conversation is that of humans, and quite homely humans at that, and not of refined cats and serpents.

Moreover, there is a serious side which makes it quite unlike Wilde. Though the dramatic excellence of the plot is delightfully unlifelike, the reactions of the characters to its well-contrived twists and turns, and their observations on what "life" is bringing them, are completely convincing. This is what would happen if real living were like this. The conversation turns on typically Eliotic themes—that we never really understand one another, that we have all our private gardens into which we escape, that we are not the same person for long, but that, all the same, what we have been must be recognized in what we are, we must come to terms with ourselves and with life. Such is Mr Eliot's unstrained and overt development of these themes that I should wonder if perhaps the explanation of this novelty were not that he had come to terms with himself as well as with us, if I had not elsewhere learned to respect his claim to classical detachment from his subjects even if I have not always found it, and his apparent ability elsewhere to turn his hand to various mediums and to draw from them precisely what tune he will.

Certainly the discussion of such serious themes must give pause even to those of us whose pure interest may be in comic entertainment. Mr Eliot will probably thus succeed in stirring to questioning thought those who might not expose themselves to a straight serious drama. At the same time perhaps I may confess to wondering just how profound and exciting this play will appear on further acquaintance, since it is so unwontedly unobscure and single-faced. For the most part it is questions it sets us asking and it does not try to persuade us into certain conclusions. And these questions need not pro-

duce Christian answers. No one should feel he is being got at, for at no point is the play in any respect a piece of Christian propaganda. At the most, it could be called a "frontier" play, and, at that, one triumphantly concerned with being a play rather than with opening the frontier.

There are some few references to things religious and some fewer to things Christian. These are mostly in the background though they are scarcely accidental, and occur towards the end, for example, the mention by the confidential clerk, Eggerson, of his being a Vicar's Warden, and Mrs Guzzard's explanation that one character has Barnabas for his Christian name after a particular church of that dedication. Such slight references as these, implying the whole scope of their maker's involvement in the life of the Church Militant, are quietly illuminating, and I hope that it is not my eagerly looking for any specifically Christian aspects of Mr Eliot's new work that makes me feel that these two characters on this account stand out somewhat. That Eggerson is the confidential clerk himself, and that his character is humorously endearing, and that he is presented as one who appears to have made a very comfortable and wise accommodation to life, increases the sense of his distinction, but only further acquaintance with the work will make it possible to say more if more ought to be said.

There is a third character who stands out in this respect. He is the confidential clerk's successor as the financier's private secretary, Colby Simpkins, believed by Sir Claude Mulhammer, the financier, to be his illegitimate son. The financier's illegitimate daughter, Lucasta, says shrewdly of Colby that, for all that she or Sir Claude or his wife, Lady Elizabeth, or Mrs Guzzard may want him, each for their own reasons, he himself, despite the occasional contrary appearance, needs no one, and is variously the egotist and the detached religious. At the very end of the play Eggerson prophesies that Colby will soon be offering himself for ordination.

Now this prophecy is not only completely consistent with the character of Colby previously presented, but is also one of those thought-stirring references characteristic of the play. But it is, for all that, not convincing. It is not, I think, that one feels at all that Mr Eliot is here determined to force Christianity on us (and propaganda for an increase of the sacred ministry at that) here at last in the tail of the play, but rather that our willing suspension of disbelief has just been strained to breaking by a previous episode. As a consequence of that episode, too, Sir Claude's final dramatic insistence that his illusion shall not be shattered and that Colby shall come back, has a false, a somewhat melodramatic, ring. It is a shame that so excellent a play should have this only partly convincing end.

The episode I am referring to is Mrs Guzzard's bombshell disclosure that Colby is, in fact, not Sir Claude's illegitimate son. I am not altogether certain that one does not sense something unconvincing about Mrs Guzzard as a whole, and we are given little opportunity of apprehending her since she appears only in the last act. But, at least, this disclosure is too much, not as an utterance of this

particular character, but as a further twist in the plot. It is possible that my incredulity derives from what I felt to be an inadequate rooting in her character of Mrs Guzzard's deception of Sir Claude when she said that Colby was his son, though it must be allowed that sufficient had been done for me to believe her a tough, firm woman, rather grim with a deep-down grief. And it is altogether in the best traditions that Mr Eliot mixes in such excruciatingly unexpected information at this late point. But it is certainly here that the serious side of the play is overbalanced by the exigencies of the comic.

I think that it is the real artistic triumph of the play that, until this point, Mr Eliot has managed to balance with unfaltering poise the comic and incredible plot with serious reference to the real situation of human beings in the world. Nowhere does either lose because of the other, and between them Mr Eliot modulates with expert and unassuming ease.

R. T. Davies.

Christmas Plays

SOME THEOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Round the crib are grouped Mary, chosen because she can sing, and Joseph, chosen because he can't sing and won't have to. Behind them are a group of angels, teen-age girls with white wings, smiling down on the crib with a protective air. Enter three shepherds with gifts and worship. In a few moments enter the wise men, who also present gifts and worship. This is the general effect of many a church Christmas play: the babe Jesus guarded by angels and welcomed by men. In such ways Religious Drama, which should be the handmaid of truth, slides into becoming the mother of falsehood. What has happened to the doctrine of the Kenosis? It has been sabotaged by the idea of "getting the young people in". Whether it helps young ladies to pose as white-winged angels in a soft pink light, whether it strengthens them morally is a matter of pastoralia, and producers are generally careful to give a word of warning here. But since the Son did "leave his throne and his kingly crown", should he really be escorted to earth by angels? By sticking these solid-looking little angels round the crib, the incarnation, God in flesh, is dwarfed. The angels from heaven are flesh and blood too, that is the impression created. By all means give the shepherds their vision of the multitude of the heavenly host. But keep them in the heavens; in other words, make perfectly plain to our all-too-materialistic congregations that angels are spiritual forces. Do not make them like a special form of heroic nursemaid, half human, half divine. The appearance of the angels should never suggest femininity. This valuable quality should be kept for the mortals.

Is it really justifiable to put wings on these angels? Wings are a means of transport into the bright blue sky. This suggests, quite needlessly, that heaven is a long way off and quite impossible for us to get to, without wings. You can spend the next six Sundays vainly proclaiming Luke 17. 21.

If it were true that nice-looking lasses with fine soprano voices were always the best mothers, then it might be justifiable to choose the Mother of our Lord on these qualifications. Let Mary have a face of sterling character. The children are going to see Cinderella a few days after the church play. Cinderella assumes that the plain are bad and selfish and cruel and that the pretty are loving and lovable. There is no need at all for Mary to bolster up this; in fact, if Mary was a girl of character but not so pretty, the Church might be doing a little to counteract the fairy story. Cinderella will sing, and there is no reason for Mary to copy her. We all love to sing the Magnificat at Evensong, and to hear the fine settings of it in cathedral choirs. But there is no excuse for making the scene of Mary's visit to Elizabeth into a little bit of opera, not unless your whole nativity play is going to be in operatic form. The Magnificat in the nativity play should be rendered by Mary with spontaneous joy and faith. In these words her character comes shining full strength across to us, her humility, her understanding of God's ways and God's purpose. That is the one thing the producer must ensure, and trying to sing it makes it far more difficult, unless you have a full-scale operatic setting where everything is being sung as well. Having preached on the Bible and how to read the Scriptures on the second Sunday in Advent, having in other Advent addresses made some references to the Old Testament and its meaning, and to the interpretation of apocalyptic, judgment, and the last things—having in fact done our best to help our people read the Book intelligently and with the help of scholarship, we abandon all this in presenting our nativity play. We abandon the whole setting of the gospel unless we show that only the few wanted God, and the masses wanted something else. We take verses out of their context unless we show that the annunciation comes into the middle of another miraculous birth recounted by a doctor, Luke. The habit of forgetting that John "was wonderfully born" (P.B. collect) is not exactly scholarship. If you are producing the impression that when Mary meets Elizabeth, the one was pregnant miraculously and the other not miraculously, then you are not following Luke, who is after all the one authority for both stories. A full and proper emphasis must be given to Luke 1. 36. Cutting that verse is sheer Marcionism. The omission of the words "seeing I know not a man" only gives the impression that sex is not very nice, especially to anyone who knows they have been bowdlerized. This is bad theology.

The diatessaron, interweaving the four gospels, is not generally regarded as very useful except in some nativity plays, where it tends to fundamentalism. One voice and 1611 throughout quotations from the Old Testament, from Johannine prologue, Luke 1, Matt. 2, Luke again, hardly reveals a God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake. . . . Surely it is much better to use a different voice for a different gospel.

More dangerous still is the undisclosed apocrypha. It is perfectly legitimate for the author to write a piece of legend or fiction into a nativity play, but he should take care not to cause stumbling to

those who do not know the New Testament as well as they ought, and who may think that the fiction is in the canon, because words from the gospels came before it. There are numerous ways of avoiding this confusion of Scripture and imagination—e.g., the modern family introduce the story, one reading the Bible and another imagining the details.

If you wish to discourage Bible reading put on an indifferent reader, with a voice of weak timbre and let him or her read as a matter of duty in apologetic manner while the scene shifters shuffle behind a flimsy curtain, and actors whisper in the vestry. If you want to make the Bible mean something, read it as news and read for the child in the second row who has never heard the story and the man in the back row who has forgotten its tremendous meaning.

The nativity play presents the great act of God in the incarnation. This is a challenge to man; an offer to man. It requires an answer, an offering of ourselves. Do not suggest that the answer is: "Yes, I will go to Communion or Eucharist next Sunday"; still less, "Yes, I will worship baby Jesus." This is only too easy. The only answer worth having is: "Yes, I will dedicate my life, Sunday worship, and daily work and leisure." This is not always achieved by building up to tableaux of worship, or by a formal procession out of church headed by crucifer and choir. Rather should we not end with a question or a sense of mission?

P. D. May.

Great Pastors—XI. John Holden

"That the diocese is ready to face this crisis we have, under God, only Bishop Holden to thank." It was almost twenty years since John Holden had left that part of China, but the words of his successor were warm with love and deep sincerity. That love had begun to grow when, as a small schoolboy, he sat at the feet of the young missionary teacher and from him learned of the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ. But it was not his own personal experience that prompted the remark. He was thinking rather of the wise planning of the Bishop, who, having seen the vision of a self-governing and self-propagating church, had with dogged determination and by sheer hard work sought to turn that vision into reality despite all the dislocations caused by civil war and banditry. Those very disorders indeed had made the more clear to him the type of church life which was required if the challenges of nationalism and communism were to be successfully faced, but the vision had come from an understanding of the deeper purposes of God.

Discipline and hard work had been key-notes in John Holden's life from the days when, as a small boy, he had gone to work as a "half-timer" in the mill at Bolton. It was not easy for his father, with a family of eleven children, to give them all the education they desired. But John never allowed difficulties of this kind to stand in his way. How hard he worked both at the mill and at the night classes on textile production which he attended can be gathered from the fact that at the age of seventeen he won a bronze medal of the City and

Guilds of London and was placed third in all England for "producing a finished piece of tapestry complete from its inception". Nor were his energies entirely absorbed by the textile industry, for he somehow found time to study Greek and Latin with his vicar.

What God would have him to be was already becoming clear in his mind, and there can be little doubt that the roots of his deep Christian faith had already been planted within him in his home; by his father, for whom he had a real affection and respect, and by his mother, whom he loved devotedly. To join the Sunday school and to sing in the choir came naturally to him, but he knew God was asking more of him than that. The offer of an important position in a textile factory in India was refused, and shortly after reaching the age of twenty-one he was accepted as a candidate by the Church Missionary Society and entered its theological college at Islington.

In his life at Bolton discipline had been necessary in order to make time for reading. It was now needed in order to ensure that academic study did not crowd out the more vital call to evangelism. China might need the Gospel, but so did Holloway Road, and the tram depot there proved an open door to the young evangelist. Nor did he forget that oft-neglected ministry of correspondence. His habit of having his desk clear of unanswered letters by Saturday night—once while at College he wrote thirty-six between the hours of 5 p.m. and 5 a.m.—he carried with him almost through the rest of his life. Those letters—never purely concerned with business but always businesslike and always pastoral—have been an inspiration to many whether they dealt with personal problems, advice on the state of a civil war, or reflections on some book he was reading.

It was in 1907 that he first sailed for China and was appointed to work in a vast inland area in the south, the Kwangsi-Hunan mission. Work had been begun there but a brief eight years before, and in pioneer evangelism John Holden found a work after his own heart. On the hundreds of narrow country paths he was soon a familiar figure. First as evangelist and later as Archdeacon and Bishop he was to be seen trudging along the road, a stick in one hand and a book in the other. That books were meant to be read and not to sit on shelves was his very firm conviction, and not only did he see to it that his own mind was kept well stimulated but he also went to considerable trouble to circulate his books amongst other members of the mission. How he had managed to acquire the art of reading while walking along unbelievably rough roads was a secret which others, who tried to imitate him, never understood. But it was a priceless habit, for it left him free at the journey's end for personal conversation so long as any wished to talk and for his endless correspondence by the light of a small wax taper in a dish of oil after others had crept away to bed.

Perhaps his profoundest conviction with regard to missionary work was a principle which found clear expression at the Willingen Conference of the International Missionary Council last year that "The Church is the Mission". Evangelistic and pastoral work are two aspects of the same life of the Church, and to separate them is

to inflict great injury on that life. John Holden therefore worked untiringly to make the Church be the Church and to get it to shoulder its responsibilities for its own life and for the evangelization of the world. This he attempted to promote at all levels of the church's organization and in terms which simple people could understand. Each parish was to undertake the evangelization of a village near at hand. The diocese was to be responsible for raising the necessary funds and sending an evangelist to open up a new area in the diocese without any help from funds from overseas. And this idea, first proposed by Bishop Holden's predecessor, was repeated on a larger scale when the whole Shen Kung Hui (the Anglican Church in China), following the initiative of the diocese of Kwangsi-Hunan, undertook entire responsibility for an area which was later to become the diocese of Shensi.

Translating this principle into personal terms, the Bishop never tired of insisting that every Christian must be a worker. The rule of life, which all baptized Christians were invited to sign, contained many practical suggestions about how this could be worked out both in the daily life and in the service of the Church. John Holden never ceased to struggle with the problem of how the Church could make more effective use of its laymen. It was this that led him to ordain deaconesses in the dioceses in which he served. It was this also which made him give so much of his time to the supervision of layreaders, when in later years he was assistant Bishop of Truro. And it was basically for this reason and not merely on account of the shortage of funds and of men for the full-time ministry that he advocated the ordination to the priesthood of men to a part-time ministry, allowing them, while ministering in an honorary capacity in a parish, to continue their secular occupations. It may well prove, as the Bishop saw reason to fear, that one of the cardinal mistakes of the modern missionary movement has been the attempt to build a ministry on too precise a Western model.

How great a harm could be done to a young church by forcing it into an unsuitable ecclesiastical mould was a danger of which John Holden was always acutely conscious. The simple matter of hymn tunes may serve as an illustration. His musical gifts were not great, but he had an ear for a tune and, having suffered agonies at the efforts of country congregations to sing Western hymns, he set himself to compose new ones built on the pentatonic scale with which the Chinese are familiar.

Even more vital to the ultimate well-being of the diocese was his determination that authority should be in the hands of the diocesan synod and not of the mission conference. It has often been suggested that power in church affairs was only transferred from Western to Chinese hands after the great anti-foreign movement and the abortive communist rising of the mid-twenties. That the rate of transference was greatly accelerated after 1927 is undoubtedly true, but men of insight were already determined that it should be so and were not in any sense forced by a growing nationalism into a policy of which they fundamentally disapproved. Thus the constitution of the diocese

of Kwangsi-Hunan, hammered out before the evacuation of the twenties, had placed all authority in the hands of the synod in matters of finance and appointment of Chinese workers but not the disposition of the missionary staff. After 1927 this exception was removed and everything done to ensure that the Chinese Christians understood that the authority was in their hands. When the communist storm finally broke some twenty years later, the church, at least administratively, was ready.

Hand in hand with his desire to see the Church in China responsible for her own affairs went his passion to have her remain in full fellowship with the Church universal. This love for the Church universal meant for him ardent advocacy of Church union. As in so many other matters, he neither neglected the problems involved nor was daunted by them, once he had become convinced of the will of God. He could be equally impatient with those who did not see the urgency of union and with those who in their great desire for it ignored the realities of the situation. That they might be better informed on the issues involved, he bought many copies of the South India scheme and circulated them to members of all denominations over a wide area in China.

Such then were some of his main ideas. Gladly would he have spent the rest of his life working them out in the diocese to which he had first been called, but it was not to be. Against his personal preference but at the insistence of the House of Bishops, he was translated in 1933 to the diocese of West China. Here a brief four years was all he was to be allowed, but they sufficed for him to leave a lasting mark. History will record that it was during this period that the two new dioceses of Eastern and Western Szechwan were created, for he early realized that an area the size of Germany and containing no railway and few roads could not be adequately administered from one centre. The records will also show a new diocesan constitution based on the same principles as that of Kwangsi-Hunan. But the people will remember a simple, roughly clad figure, toiling over the hills that he might preach the Gospel and minister to their needs.

Considering the great demands he always made on his physical strength it is hardly surprising that in 1937 he should have a severe heart attack. For many this would have suggested retirement, but not for John Holden, as the diocese of Truro was soon to discover. There as assistant Bishop and Archdeacon of Cornwall all his great strength of character and shrewdness of judgment were brought to bear on the work of an English diocese. Lonely country clergymen soon learned to value, as their Chinese fellow ministers had done, his frequent pastoral visits and his readiness to travel any distance for a confirmation service, no matter how small the numbers. He never worked harder than in his closing eleven years when his one concession to the frailty of the flesh was the purchase of a car. He died, as he would have wished, in harness; a realist with a touch of inspiration, a puritan with a rare sense of humour, a hard-working saint of God.

DOUGLAS N. SARGENT.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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CORRESPONDENCE

FAITH AND SCIENCE

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

After reading Mr Montgomery Belgion's diatribe in your last issue I do not wish to alter a word in the paragraph of my article which he has selected as the target of his attack. He has completely misunderstood what I was trying to say in it.

He charges me with all kinds of theological heresies, but in the paragraph which he quotes I consciously and deliberately refrained from raising any theological issue, reserving theological discussion for the main body of the article, in which I attempted to interpret Heim's philosophical and theological views. These seem to me important or I should not have troubled to write the article. Heim's main concern is to insist that there are aspects of reality that are not accessible to investigation by scientific method. This, so far as I can infer from his letter, is precisely what Mr Belgion is anxious to assert. He has chosen to direct his fire not at the philosophical or the theological parts of my article, but at a passage in which there are no theological assertions at all.

In the paragraph he quotes I was concerned, in the first place, with questions of fact about the world in which we are now living. I was not referring to anything that could be called the philosophy of science but, as the sentences omitted in Mr Belgion's quotation plainly show, to the *fact* of the rise of modern science. I mentioned Professor Herbert Butterfield's estimate of the significance of this fact as the birth of a new civilization "strange as Nineveh and Babylon". It would take a volume to justify this estimate, but it is shared by many eminent thinkers, Christian and non-Christian, and cannot be disposed of by mere vituperation.

The other factual statement on which Mr Belgion fastens is that "in taking charge of his own destiny through the new powers with which science and technology have invested him man has reached adulthood". Is it not simple fact that man has to-day demonstrated his ability to overcome scourges to which former generations pas-

sively submitted as acts of God, and developed powers to control nature which outdistance those of earlier ages as much as the powers of a grown man exceed the reach of an infant? Mr Belgion regards the use of the terms "destiny" and "adulthood" as evidence of the contemptible "quality of the thinking". If I am liable to this charge, I am in good company. In a remarkable article contributed a few years ago to the *Dublin Review* Père Henri de Lubac wrote: "An overmastering idea has arisen with the strength of some hitherto undiscovered force. . . . Humanity is discovering itself. *It means to forge its destiny*" [his italics]. If Mr Belgion wants to understand the meaning of the modern experience of adulthood he should read *Letters and Papers from Prison*, just published in English translation by the S.C.M. Press, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, one of the acutest thinkers as well as one of the heroic martyrs of our time.[1]

Secondly, and more importantly, I was concerned in the paragraph which Mr Belgion attacks with the question of *language*. It so happens that I began my life as a missionary, and the greater part of my life has been spent in the service of the foreign missionary movement. It was forcibly brought home to me by this experience that before a missionary to a foreign country can begin his task he must spend two years in mastering the language of the people whom he seeks to serve. Mr Belgion will no doubt admit that the Christian Gospel has not been effectively presented to non-English speaking Chinese or Indian villagers, if it is proclaimed, no matter how eloquently and persuasively, in the missionary's mother tongue. I have since come to see that in the question of language there are involved profounder things than differences of vocabulary and grammar. I agree with those who hold that statements and propositions have no meaning in themselves apart from the person who enunciates them and those who listen to him. The statements of every speaker or writer are rooted in a whole complex of hypotheses, theories, beliefs, assumptions, and attitudes and derive their meaning from these. They have a quite different meaning for those who have a different set of hypotheses, theories, beliefs, assumptions, and attitudes. Where these differences of presuppositions exist there is a task of translation needed which is just as necessary as the translation of the Christian Gospel into the Chinese language if it is to be understood by the Chinese people. That is all that I was trying to say in the passage which arouses Mr Belgion's indignation, and it seems to me a simple and indisputable fact.

When Mr Belgion maintains that the thing to wedge into one's head about science is that science has no need of philosophy, and hence no need of theology either, I think that he intends to say something which, rightly stated, I not only would accept but strongly wish to assert. But the truth is only one among other truths, and divorced from these it is a simplification which has little relation to the existing intellectual situation. I am reminded of the words of

[1] "The attack by Christian apologetic upon the adulthood of the world I consider to be in the first place pointless, in the second ignoble, and in the third unchristian" (p. 147).

Theodor Haecker, spoken in a different context, in which he warns us to "beware of the terrible light-hearted simplifiers. They create the most hopeless confusion in the long run".

The real concern which lay behind my article is the need for communication. I am concerned about the large proportion of youth receiving education in this country who grow up in an intellectual environment and imbibe ideas about the world in relation to which the Christian message makes no sense at all, and cannot make sense. I see no hope of their understanding that message unless we take the pains to understand their approach to things and try to discover the points at which contact can be made with it. That is the task to which every Christian missionary worthy of the name sets himself.

But there is perhaps a deeper question involved than the practical one. It seems to me probable that between Mr Belgion and me there is a fundamental disagreement, though it does not lie at the point where he has placed it. I refuse to believe that the men and women whom I have in mind, remote as they are at present from any understanding of Christian truth, are sunk in complete ignorance and blindness and wholly separated from the hand of their Creator. I believe that in their gropings after truth and in their apprehension of what their own experience of life has taught them they have something to give to Christian believers as well as something to receive from them. I distrust Mr Belgion's sweeping generalizations. I am opposed to all forms of dogmatism. I adhere to what Tillich calls the essential Protestant principle that nothing *human*—no individual, group, tradition, or interpretation—can claim infallibility, finality or absoluteness, which belong to God alone. I should like to meet scientists on the ground of a common humility, suggested by one of them who, after expounding the view that in science we make acquaintance only with symbols of the unknown, adds that "when the orthodox in the Churches make similar recognition that 'we see in a glass darkly' the scientific conscience will no longer feel excluded".[1]

Yours, etc.,

Dunford College, Midhurst.

J. H. Oldham.

THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST

To the Editor of Theology.

Sir,

I welcome Mr Scott's statement that differences of terminology probably conceal a larger measure of agreement than appears on the surface. I think that is true and might have concluded this public exchange of views. But Mr Scott asks two direct questions, to which it is only courteous to make some reply.

He is still very severe on my logic, and presumably on the logic of all those—among them some of the wisest and most acute minds in

[1] Martin Johnson, *Time and Universe for the Scientific Conscience*, Cambridge University Press, p. 32.

Christendom—who have thought that there is a real sense in which Christ may be said to offer himself in the Eucharist. False logic, ambiguity, and now, *vae mihi*, undistributed middle, petitio principii, and dilemma are the substance of the indictment. Well, no doubt I present the case of my betters in a very inadequate way. Perhaps, also, we are all more or less under the lash of F. H. Bradley's quip about metaphysicians and give bad reasons for what we believe on instinct. But I do not really think I am impaled on either horn of Mr Scott's dilemma when I use the phrase "sacrificial humanity".

I am entirely with him in insisting (as do St Paul, St John, and the writer to the Hebrews) on the "element of once-for-allness", the saving death on the Cross. What, in the context of the Biblical theology as a whole, I am unable to see is that Christ's "sacrifice" is best taken to mean his immolation on the Cross and nothing else. The death is once and for all; so, too, is the earthly life of the Son of man. Both the life and the death are sacrificial, an offering to God of perfect obedience; both belong to time and human history; and because that history is sinful history, both involve suffering and loss. But since both are the life and death of God made man, they are more than temporal and historical; they belong to the eternal order. Why, then, should it be illegitimate to think that their sacrificial quality is not confined to their temporal occurrence but is an abiding quality of the God-man and is seen as such by God the Father? Hebrews 7–10 seems to me to insist equally on two things: the once-for-allness of the Cross and the eternal priesthood operative in the heavens. When Fr Thornton (*Common Life in the Body of Christ*, p. 345) speaks of the Eucharist as spanning " the whole of the Christian dispensation, and therefore all creation too, in its exaltation of Christ's redeeming love before God and man", he speaks, as I think, justly; and he certainly speaks out of an unsurpassed knowledge of the Scriptures.

Whatever be the truth about my logic, I can say with assurance that Mr Scott is wrong in supposing that I regard Biblical evidence as "irrelevant" to an important theological issue. He asks where in Scripture our Lord's sacrifice for sin is spoken of as now continuing. But since, so it seems, he and I are meaning somewhat different things by our Lord's "sacrifice" and its "continuance", the passages that I find illuminating on this theme will be interpreted by him in other terms. I have already referred to Heb. 7–10. One might add Rom. 8. 34, 1 John 2. 1–2, 1 Peter 2. 5, 1 Tim. 2. 5, Heb. 12. 24. But these texts will imply present "sacrificial" activity of Christ only if we see the offering of the will in love as the true centre of sacrifice. That the Biblical understanding of sacrifice is indeed this seems to be the lesson taught by Isaiah 53, Psalm 40, John 4. 34 and 6. 38.

Yours, etc.,

H. Balmforth.

Ely.

[This correspondence is now closed.—Ed. Theology.]

THE SHORTAGE OF CLERGY

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

DEAR SIR,

This morning I was reading the August and September numbers of THEOLOGY, having saved the former to look at at leisure during my holiday.

Mr Ewen McEwen's letter on "The Shortage of Clergy" attracted my attention. If the Church of God, in the great need which he describes, is to seek a lesson from the Army, what about this advertisement which appeared in the Public Appointments column of to-day's *Times*?

> The War Office invites applications from women who wish to serve as Staff Officers in the British Army. Candidates should be between 23 and 35 years and have a University Degree or good business experience in civilian life, or previous Service experience . . .

Yours faithfully,
E. M. BATTEN.

11, SPRINGDALE ROAD,
BROADSTONE,
DORSET.
3 *September* 1953.

EPISCOPAL SIGNATURES

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

DEAR SIR,

A question on a matter which has long intrigued me—how should a bishop sign his name? In THEOLOGY for September, p. 347, we have "Henry, Knaresborough", and in our Diocesan Magazine we get "Arthur, Reading". But we also get "Kenneth Dorchester" and "Robert Buckingham". At one time I thought the comma an oversight on the part of the printer. But it is evidently a deliberate insertion, and I am wondering what is the significance. The presence or absence of a comma can make a world of difference, and I am looking to you for enlightenment.

Yours truly,
MAURICE FROST.

THE VICARAGE,
DEDDINGTON,
OXFORD.
2 *September* 1953.

The Bishop of Knaresborough writes: "The reason why I sign myself 'Henry, Knaresborough' is in order to indicate that Knaresborough is not my surname but an abbreviation for 'bishop of Knaresborough'—the same purpose as is, I believe, intended by the traditional use in the case of greater and older titles of the abbreviated Latin adjective, e.g. Dunelm[ensis], Cicestr[ensis], etc."

BOOK REVIEWS

THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF INFANT BAPTISM. By P. Ch. Marcel. Translated by P. E. Hughes. James Clarke. 15s.

THE ROOT OF THE VINE. By Anton Fridrichsen and others, with Introduction by A. G. Hebert, S.S.M. A. and C. Black. 16s.

M. Marcel is a French Reformed theologian, and this book is a translation of a full and systematic exposition of his viewpoint. It falls into three parts. Only after he has concluded a general study of sacraments—signs and seals to strengthen faith—and expounded the Covenant of Grace, does the author feel able to set forth the baptism of adults and infants as the Sacrament of the Covenant.

Foreign travel is said to broaden the mind. Certainly most Anglican theologians, fresh perhaps from their "Baptism To-day", will survey with fascination a landscape in which their own problems are tackled with single-minded devotion to a method radically different from their own. They will discover an almost fundamentalist devotion to the Bible and they may suspect a quasi-fundamentalist approach to Reformed Confessions and the writings of Calvin (sixty quotations from the latter, some lengthy, all laudatory). Accustomed to an "incarnational" theology, they will find here no interest in Christ's own baptism. They will be told that a pragmatic approach to infant baptism is a betrayal of theology. The laying on of hands is not mentioned!

M. Marcel leans on Oscar Cullmann for Biblical exegesis and selects Karl Barth as his principal opponent. His central concept is the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace, "the germ, the root, the pith of all revelation, and consequently of all theology". Starting from the supposition that the Old Testament is "one in essence and substance with the New", he concludes that the sacraments of the old dispensation, although differing in form, have essentially the same significance as those of the new. The nerve of his argument concerns the "sacrament of circumcision". The children of the Covenant belong to the Covenant, and, just as they were circumcised under the old dispensation, so under the new they should all be baptized.

This book has most of the merits and the demerits of Calvinist theology. Here is wealth of learning, much profundity of thought, some good exegesis. The reasoning usually is clear, incisive, systematic. And yet . . . The author has wide chinks in his armour of defence, but it is not just that. Perhaps the main objection to this work is its apparent legalism and rigidity which can, for example, speak of the Covenant of Grace as a means "to render those who refuse salvation inexcusable".

Most Anglicans will feel more at home in Uppsala than in Paris. *The Root of the Vine* is a symposium of Swedish essays, led by Anton Fridrichsen, lately New Testament Professor at Uppsala. He himself contributes a masterly essay on "Jesus, St Paul, and St John", in which he introduces pertinent remarks on the methodology of Biblical theology in general and the study of the New Testament in par-

ticular. The remaining six essays are by other members of the Divinity Faculty at Uppsala who are all, as their contributions show, old pupils of Dr Fridrichsen. There are essays on the Biblical doctrines of creation, election, and the people of God. More specialized contributions include a new and original inquiry into the nature of early Christian preaching and a study of the Exodus as the type of Christ's salvation. Mr Riesenfeld contributes the most outstanding essay of the symposium on "The Ministry in the New Testament". His aim is to show that the ministry is part of the structure of the Church in the same way as the Messiah is indissolubly united to the structure of the Kingdom of God. His treatment is brilliant and compelling.

The quality of these essays is consistently high and they present a remarkable unity of outlook. These authors are well informed in literary and historical criticism of the Bible. While they use its technique, they have no illusions about its limitations. Their exegesis is always Biblical, yet never "literalistic" or allegorical. All presuppose the fundamental unity of the Bible. "This unity", writes Dr Fridrichsen, "is not a uniformity. On the contrary, it is to the interest of faith to have disclosed variety, growth, and movement along the Biblical images; for our aim is to discern history, the continuity of events, reality working and being transformed—in short, eschatological fulfilment in preparation under the old Israel, in realization through Jesus Christ, and in interpretation by his Church". Let us hope that this book is only a first introduction to Sweden's "post-critical" Biblical theology.

Westcott House, Cambridge. Hugh Montefiore.

The Christian Attitude to other Religions. By E. C. Dewick. Cambridge University Press. 25s.

Introduction à la Doctrine Pontificale des Missions. By André Rétif. Éditions du Seuil. N.p.

"In India recently two missionaries saw a new Hindu temple being built. 'I hate to see that,' said one. 'Another fortress of the enemy!' 'Well,' said the second, 'I'm not so sure. I would be rather inclined to say: Another witness to man's search for God—and thank God for it.'"

Whether autobiographical or not this anecdote (p. 40) reveals Dr Dewick's main thesis. A breadth of reading attested by excellent footnotes, bibliography, and indices informs a liberal breadth of outlook in general support of the anecdote's second speaker. Analysing (Chs I, II) the challenge of the "political" and the non-Christian religions and the Church's response, Dr Dewick is fair both to her and to them. His conclusions about Christ's own attitude to other religions (Ch. III) are as balanced as those he praises in Israel Abrahams (p. 72). If on the tradition of the Church (Ch. IV) he quotes Erasmus with relish, "*Sancte Socrates, Ora pro nobis*" (p. 125), he

allows that the weight of Christian tradition inclines to a militancy towards other religions based on the supremacy of Christ and the universality of the gospel. Yet Chapter V (The Recovery of First Principles) remains an effective plea against militancy. But in Chapter VI (The Reform of Missionary Policy and Practice) Dr Dewick's criticism is so tempered, his reform so generalized, that we may find ourselves neither convicted nor convinced.

Are fairness and balance achieved elsewhere also at the expense of definiteness and clarity? Are we to understand, for instance, that the "world-wide outlook" of Jesus (pp. 88 f.) supports a liberal or a militant attitude? Yet the author does occasionally "shoot down" opinions he disapproves with a "right and left" of humour. To his right he finds Dr Kraemer's "absolute element" in the gospel as "indefinable and elusive as Barth's conception of the Word of God" (p. 45). On the left he satirizes Gandhi's favourite picture of the Christian silently shedding his influence as a rose its scent. "But God has made the rose as part of the vegetable kingdom to which speech does not appertain" (p. 192). To the author, in fact, the revelation of God in Christ, if not necessarily complete, exhaustive, final, absolute, exclusive, or entirely other. is assuredly "central, distinctive, supreme, and satisfying for all mankind" (p. 202).

André Rétif's handbook is to be commended (with appropriate reservations) as a stimulus both to our thinking and to our praying; and not least to fellow "other ranks" in the ecumenical movement. As the Reformation developed in the then comparatively "younger churches" so may "the Reunion", as already significantly though partially in South India. Immediate intrinsic interest apart, our understanding of papal missionary theory and practice may be found of incalculable importance in the development of the "coming great church".

BANGALORE. A. H. DAMMERS.

A PROPOSED PRAYER BOOK for the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon. S.P.C.K. Rs.4.

This book presents the first attempt at a complete revision of the Book of Common Prayer since the spate of Revised Books in the 1920s which produced the English, Scottish, Irish, American, Canadian, and South African versions. It contains some matter of purely local relevance, but much that will be useful when at length the Church of England sets about the task of revision once more.

First, the order of contents has been changed, largely in accordance with Mr Chavasse's article in THEOLOGY for May 1949. After the Kalendar and Rules come the Daily Offices, Litany, and Prayers, followed by the Psalter. Then come Baptism and Confirmation; then the Communion, *followed* by the Collects, Epistles, and Gospels. Next, the Occasional Offices, and finally the Ordinal. This is a considerable improvement.

Three Communion Services are provided: (i) a revision of 1662;

(ii) 1662 itself; (iii) an entirely independent "Liturgy for India", compiled from Eastern sources, and with completely new lessons. In (i) the order is the same as that of 1928, except that the Prayer of Humble Access immediately precedes the Communion. The Prayer of Consecration follows that of Ceylon in beginning "Holy in truth art thou . . ." as suggested by Frere, but resembles the South African prayer in retaining what Frere called the "intruded clause" ("Hear us, O merciful Father . . ."). The Prayer for the Church is also given in a very effective litany-form.

Useful additions include a Midday Office, Family Prayers, a section on the Church and Ministry in the Catechism, a Form of Confession, and the second Shorter Litany from the Scottish Book. Adults and children are baptized with the same form.

As in 1928, the Daily Offices are separated from their Introduction; and the universal practice of adding intercessions, hymns, and a sermon is recognized (for the first time?) in a section headed The Conclusion to . . . The Psalms are printed in a conservative revision, presumably that of 1916; the Canticles, however, are completely unaltered. The colon is replaced by an asterisk; and the portions of the 119th psalm are numbered. The traditional endings of the collects and the rules for their use are given among the rubrics before the Communion. The *Benedicite* is skilfully shortened.

The Book is excessively long, and a Shortened Edition will be necessary for ordinary use. The propers alone occupy 410 of the 931 pages, and most could be confined to an Altar Book, while several of the Offices could be printed separately, or in a Manual. It is difficult to reconcile the idea of a single book with a medieval wealth of propers and offices.

These are only a few of the points that arouse approval, disagreement, or debate. It is a fortunate Church that can produce such a book and use it.

G. J. Cuming.

St John's College,
Durham.

Saints in Politics: The "Clapham Sect" and the Growth of Freedom. By Ernest Marshall Howse. University of Toronto Press. George Allen and Unwin. 16s.

Writing in the *Sunday Times* (16 August 1953), Mr Raymond Mortimer somewhat unadvisedly declared that "This is the first book ever devoted to the Clapham Sect". He must have overlooked not only John Telford's *A Sect that Moved the World* (1907), but also John A Patten's *These Remarkable Men* (Lutterworth Press, 1945): the former is included in Mr Howse's bibliography. What is true, however, is that *Saints in Politics* is the first really substantial and scholarly treatment of "that confederacy which, when pent up within the narrow limits of Clapham, jocose men invidiously called a 'sect' " (Sir James Stephen, "The Clapham Sect", in *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*): and it is a very valuable contribution to our knowledge of the period. "Such a subject", wrote Miss Dorothy Pym in *Battersea*

Rise (1934), "needs a book—and a dull book—to itself." It is, however, difficult to imagine how a book about the Clapham "Sect" could possibly be dull: and Mr Howse's volume is certainly as fascinating as it is instructive.

It covers a great deal of ground: but so did the activities of this Evangelical "pressure group". Their greatest achievements were, of course, the Abolition of the Slave Trade (1807) and of Slavery (1833). But in the interval between these two campaigns, they took up the cause of Foreign Missions, assisted in the foundation of the C.M.S., planted a negro colony at Sierra Leone, sent out a chaplain to Botany Bay, and, after a long and hard-fought battle, secured not only an Episcopal establishment in India, but also the first financial grant for promoting education among the natives. At home, they supported Sunday Schools, subsidized the Cheap Repository Tracts, founded a magazine (*The Christian Observer*), and promoted the British and Foreign Bible Society. Moreover, "in one of the most reactionary periods of English history, . . . they favoured parliamentary reform, penal reform, and the reform of the game and criminal laws, fought for the first factory legislation, advocated Roman Catholic emancipation, denounced state lotteries, opposed the press gang, supported the chimney sweep, and, against the accepted sentiment of the time, engaged in a multitude of enterprises to educate an illiterate populace" (p. 133). It is indeed not merely an impressive but an astounding record.

But Cobbett (who regarded the demand for popular education as "despicable cant and nonsense") had an obsessional dislike of Wilberforce; and Chesterton admired Cobbett; and the philanthropists of Clapham had the misfortune to be pilloried as well by Hazlitt, Sydney Smith, and Thackeray. Moreover, those picturesque historians, the Hammonds, "rarely mention Wilberforce save to sneer at his conservatism and his piety"; and Professor Raven, in his *Christian Socialism*, with a surprising disregard of fact, accuses him of having "consistently opposed every single attempt to benefit the condition of the workers by legislation". It is true, indeed, that William Wilberforce, as a Tory Member of Parliament during the Napoleonic Wars and the semi-revolutionary period after Waterloo, voted with the Government (although by no means always in a spirit of unqualified support) for repressive measures curtailing civil liberty: and this, of course, in the eyes of a generation that did not show itself particularly squeamish about the use of Regulation 18B during the war of 1939-45, is an unforgivable offence. It is true also that the philanthropy of Clapham was paternalist, and not democratic, or radical, or socialistic: but this is only to say that it belonged to "the Age of Benevolence"—the eighteenth century—and not (by some miraculous anticipation) to the Era of the Common Man and of the Welfare State. The social philosophy of the Age of Benevolence has been disarmingly depicted by Dr M. G. Jones in her classic study of *The Charity School Movement* (1938): and, if we are permitted to judge it by its fruits, it is not altogether to be despised.

Yet the old claptrap still goes on. That the Clapham Sect secured

the abolition of the slave trade and of slavery is freely conceded, but this is apparently outweighed by the fact that they neglected at the same time to envisage and to carry through the extensive program of factory legislation associated with the name of Shaftesbury in the next generation: which, as Mr Howse aptly remarks, "is like reproaching Columbus for not also discovering Australia" (p. 134). "In my copy of the Hammonds' *Town Labourer*", writes Mr Raymond Mortimer, "there is a pencilled note by Augustine Birrell; '*O caeca mens hominum!* Wilberforce's heart was wrung by West Indian slavery but couldn't see it in Yorkshire.' " Without wasting time on looking for a beam in Mr Birrell's eye (or heart, as the case may be), it may suffice to quote Mr Howse: "Wilberforce in 1802 joined with Sir Robert Peel in establishing the first Factory Act, but objected that the Act did not go far enough. In 1805 he took up the cause of the Yorkshire weavers. In 1818 he supported Peel in a further extension of the Factory Act" (p. 131). Yet Dr Raven has assured us, with some rhetorical exuberance, that Wilberforce "never realized that, while he was bringing liberty to negroes in the plantations, the white slaves of industry were being made the victims of a tyranny a thousandfold (*sic*) more cruel": and it is probably too much to hope that even Mr Howse's vindication, which is judicious and restrained, will avail to eradicate a calumny so deeply rooted in the popular historical imagination.

Finally, Mr Howse points out that the Clapham Sect invented a technique of agitation which was indeed to be imitated and applied far more unscrupulously by the anti-Corn Law League. They developed "a strategy of organization and propaganda which was a new and effective feature in English politics. . . . The Clapham Sect also developed the use of the anniversary, with its mass meetings, its well-planned oratory, and, later, its collections, and its provision for the attendance of women. They developed, too, and demonstrated by numerous examples, a strategy for preparing petitions, and bringing them at critical moments to bear on Parliament." (The modern maxim, "Write to your M.P. about it", is a legacy of the Anti-Slavery Crusade.) "They gave expert teaching, in fact, in two things: first, how to create public opinion; and then how to bring the pressure of that opinion against the government" (p. 181). If the twentieth century is the age of the public spectacle, the nineteenth century was, *par excellence*, the age of the public meeting: and the public meeting of the nineteenth century was pre-eminently the creation of the Clapham "Sect", whose meritorious and memorable achievements in many spheres of Christian enterprise have been so brilliantly epitomized by Mr Howse.

CHARLES SMYTH.

THE VOCABULARY OF POLITICS. By T. D. Weldon. Pelicans. 2s.

Those of us who seek to understand the philosophy now dominant in Britain can have no better introduction than Mr Weldon's Pelican. The author is a Fellow of Magdalen College, whose teaching

has a great influence in Oxford, especially on those training for leadership in administration and publicity.

"Philosophers", he writes, "have largely ceased to put questions of the form 'What is truth?' and 'Do material things exist?' but ask instead 'What kind of information is conveyed by the statement that a proposition is true or that material things exist?'" This method of linguistic analysis is here applied to the classical theories of Democracy (based on the Rights of Man and the Rule of Law), Hegelian Idealism and Marxism; and it is shown to what extent these theories depend on the abuse or misunderstanding of words such as "Freedom", "Authority", and "Society". Mr Weldon's method can rapidly be connected with the "theological realism" whose prophet is Reinhold Niebuhr, but Christians must notice how the argument on p. 111 that "the fact that the dialectical movement is held to be omnipresent and all-pervasive is precisely what reveals its emptiness and futility" neatly represents the arguments often thought to show all theology meaningless. The sticks here used to beat those who, in another context, are the enemies of orthodox Christianity would, indeed, pierce the hands of very many Christian theorists.

Significant over wide areas of the national life is the post-1945 collapse of intellectual leadership in party politics; and anyone who reads this book will understand why so few Oxford men are now prepared to throw themselves into causes, lost or otherwise. The last third of Mr Weldon's book is an almost passionate defence of the teaching which (often at second- or third-hand) has so largely influenced this change. For the philosophical revolt is against the Platonic illusions of real essences and absolute standards, and Mr Weldon recognizes that there are many who protest that "it is surely dangerous even if it is true to maintain that the intellectual heritage of Greece, which has so long been accepted as the great foundation of Western culture, is now a liability and not an asset". But he replies that it is the function of political philosophy, not to assert the eternal superiority of any type of political organization, but to elucidate and to examine the preferences already held by the students of philosophy for reasons derived from all their previous experience. Reasons which do not stand up to such examination are best abandoned. On p. 176, Mr Weldon gives the tests which he applies before taking sides in politics: freedom to criticize ranks high.

The last chapter is on "Politics and Morals", concluding that "what we need to get us out of our political difficulties is a good deal more thought and a good deal less emotion than is usually devoted to them". "When we say 'You ought not to do that' we are using the language of rules, and it is grammatically impossible to infer a rule from any set of facts. Rules are prescriptions. They are not like natural laws. We make them up." Then was Antigone wrong? "Certainly the rules made up by politicians are not the only rules we recognize, and among the non-political rules are an important group usually called 'moral' which comprises (*a*) formalized rules laid down by religious authorities, (*b*) conventions recognized by groups of people." Mr Weldon points out that in countries where one religion

is completely dominant, the distinction between political and moral rules scarcely exists. "In others where it is agreed that political rules are made by popularly elected representatives and are to be justified solely by empirical reasons, it is often the case that moral rules are still supposed to have some other justification and to be the special preserve of the priests. It is difficult to see how this can be more than a stage of transition or, as some would prefer to call it, a temporary aberration."

D. L. Edwards.

All Souls College,
Oxford.

St Teresa of Jesus and other Essays and Addresses. By E. Allison Peers. Faber and Faber. 25s.

Christian Simplicity in St Thérèse. A collection of essays, edited by Michael Day. Burns Oates. 9s. 6d.

Professor Peers's book is a typical product of the scholarship of a great man whose life was devoted above all to the study of Spain and of her mystics. In this cause he had already done more for English students than any other man by his critical editions of the works of St Teresa and of St John of the Cross and his *Studies of the Spanish Mystics.*

The book opens with three essays on St Teresa, which bring out three of her great qualities—joy, simplicity, and practicality. The first essay, on St Teresa as Foundress, should dispose of the popular misconception that mystics are "misty" or idle; for the tireless Foundress, the dauntless traveller, the joyful adventurer, *is* St Teresa the mystic who dwells in the "Seventh Mansions" of her "Interior Castle", where souls "of outward repose . . . get less and less", she tells us in this work which Professor Peers describes as "one of the greatest mystical works in Christian literature".

This most widely read and enjoyed of all mystical writers imagined she could not write. What she did write was intended for her own nuns alone, and had she not written under obedience to her confessors the great mystic would have remained unknown.

An essay on the Historical Problem of Spanish Mysticism implicitly attributes the great body of mystical literature which emanated from Spain between 1500 and 1675 to this act of obedience. For mystics, Professor Peers points out, are generally inarticulate; and it was St Teresa above all who popularized her predecessors and inspired her successors.

The derivative nature of the mystical element in the poetry of the Golden Age is emphasized in the two following essays. The first is a study of mysticism in the poetry of Fray Luis de León, a mystically minded prose-writer, whose poetry is more epicurean and stoic than Christian and mystical, the one striking exception being *The Heavenly Life,* translated here in full, a lovely song of yearning for union with God. The four Golden Age poets Professor Peers next turns to are seldom thought of as mystics; which indeed they are not.

But he finds that each of them is influenced by mysticism. Their religious aspirations, if not their religious experiences, are those of the contemplative. They all manifest desires for "something closer to Christ than the foot of the Cross and the hope of Heaven".

An essay on St John of the Cross is particularly welcome, for it introduces English readers to the results of the latest research into the Saint's life and works. His persecutions and the reasons for them are especially interesting. The more fantastic versions of his escape from his Toledo prison by supernatural means are exploded.

Turning to his poems, Professor Peers examines new evidence that the Saint was a "copyist" and demonstrates convincingly that, though he did use the works of other poets, it was only that he might transform them from the banal to the sublime.

Only those whose interest in the literature is comparable to their interest in the mysticism of Spain will be quite happy to find fifty pages devoted to Cervantes, a fish out of water here.

The book ends aptly with a biographical sketch of Dom Edmund Gurdon, a Carthusian monk who set a rare example of that detachment preached by St John of the Cross.

Fr Day edits yet another book on the Saint of Lisieux. Eight priests each contribute a previously published essay; and the resultant repetitions are infuriating. The book is overloaded with adjectives and adverbs and its matter might well be compressed into a pamphlet. The reader wishing to study Ste Thérèse or simplicity could do better elsewhere.

PETER GRAHAM.

ST ALBANS.

EXISTENTIALISM AND THE MODERN PREDICAMENT. By F. H. Heinemann. A. and C. Black. 18s.

Dr Heinemann is well qualified to act as an interpreter of existentialism. He has studied the movement for more than twenty years, and is personally acquainted with some of its leaders. His reading is comprehensive and up to date. And he is a philosopher in his own right, who brings to his criticism a fruitful blend of constructive sympathy. What he offers us, in the comparatively modest space of some 200 pages, is first a survey of those modern social problems which are of special concern to philosophers; secondly, an outline of the thought of Kierkegaard, Husserl, Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre, Marcel, and Berdyaev; and thirdly, the sketch of a future metaphysics which shall answer the problems which the existentialists discern but fail to solve. This is an ambitious program, and I can hardly say that the book completely fulfils it; but it is a gallant attempt, and though not very easy is almost certainly the best book on existentialism that has yet appeared in English.

Dr Heinemann's own position seems to combine a sympathy for existentialism with a strong infusion of Aristotelian commonsense. He is clearly conversant with logical positivism also, as with the freer techniques of the logical empiricists; and, interestingly, he holds that logic can and should be studied in a detached, impersonal fashion,

irrespective of one's ultimate interests; "logic is and remains the science of the rules of correct reasoning". The danger arises when it comes to dominate philosophy; a philosophy dominated by logic forgets its true function; and the resulting aimlessness, he thinks, is part of the whole contemporary tangle in which man's real interests are increasingly submerged by his techniques, leading to a breakdown of human relationships, anxiety, and frustration. The existentialists have at least shown us what is wrong: if man is to dominate his machines, he needs a return to first-hand experience, indeed a spiritual revival; and the philosopher can help by providing a picture of the world which gives due recognition to individual effort, reflection, and choice.

Though he is strongly critical of Heidegger, Dr Heinemann permits himself an occasional excursion into metaphysical language in its most intransigent form; for instance, there is a real "problem of not-being, i.e. how it should be possible that not-being or nothing *is*". Nevertheless he thinks that the category of "existence" is elusive and unsatisfactory, and in an attractive concluding chapter makes a well-reasoned claim for his chosen category of "response" as a "key-symbol for the co-ordination of the different spheres of our experience".

Inevitably the sketches of individual existentialists show some variation in quality. I doubt if the 16 pages allotted to Kierkegaard do justice to his complex personality, and the next chapter, on Husserl, seems unnecessarily obscure; it could have begun with a much simpler explanation of "phenomenology". The next four chapters are vigorous and good; Sartre is clearly focused in the context of the French Resistance, and there is a penetrating discussion of Heidegger, though perhaps a little harsh in its suggestion that his second phase is mere wilful mystification; might it be due to the over-sensitivity of the man who resents the element of falsification in all description, and attempts the impossible task of creating a language through which reality will speak for itself? A slight but attractive sketch of Berdyaev concludes this part of the book.

I hope Dr Heinemann will develop his "metaphysics of response". The term is so far happily free from the equivocations that have grown up round "encounter" and "the transcendent", and usefully reminds us that our thinking develops within a context of physical and nervous responses. The author indicates a possible transition to an ethics based on responsibility; and finally he affirms the universe to be such that our crucial response must be spiritual and personal: "Lo, here am I; send me."

Keble College, Oxford. G. C. Stead.

Hiob der Existentialist. By Hans Ehrenberg. Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider. N.p.

According to Dr Ehrenberg, our time is ripe for Job. The bourgeois world, affluent and punctilious in observances, has broken down even as the affluent and piously scrupulous Job broke down in his day.

Our time asks afresh the old question: "Is there a God, a real and living God?" Dr Ehrenberg goes on to suggest that Job's lament in the earlier part of Chapter XXIV is the first "socialist election speech"! Without disputing that, it may be said that our time is distinguished by more than the threat to private capital and the sacrifice of ends to means. For millions, it has been and is a time of tribulation. They have suffered bereavement or infirmity; many have lost all material possessions, many have been chased and pushed about. They have shared the destiny of Job, and nobody could be better qualified to show them that the Book of Job remains contemporary than Dr Ehrenberg.

For he too has known tribulation. First the National Socialists interned him in Germany as an undesirable native and then the English interned him at Aintree as an undesirable alien. From that experience he went on into the midst of others' tribulation: at the end of the war he returned to Germany at the earliest permitted moment, and went to live in the Ruhr in the days when the people there were going hungry to bed in packed and often extemporized dormitories and clutching their rags about them for a phantom warmth. Whether or not the bourgeois world has in fact broken down west of the Oder, and whether or not its downfall can bring Job into the midst of our time, it is a time that should be able to understand how Job felt while Satan was plaguing him. It has had its share of being plagued. And that is not all.

An ostensible novelty of our time is existentialism, and Dr Ehrenberg—himself one of the latest existentialists—is persuaded that Job was the earliest. So he chooses the dialogue form, and causes Job to speak again. There are five dialogues, of which the first two are intended to be dramatic and the remainder theological. In the first two Job has a single interlocutor, The Man—i.e. "an average middle-aged man, typical of our day". In the third and fifth dialogues The Man is joined by The Reader—who is younger, the personification, we are told, of the twentieth century, and who binds up the drama of Job's situation with God's Affair. In the fourth dialogue Job converses with the Spirit of Elihu—who may be likened, we learn, "to almost any divinity professor". We expect Dr Ehrenberg to be imbued with the spirit of the Old Testament (though not necessarily with that of Job, who, he says, was not a Jew, but probably a Hittite), for he is a Jew by race if a Lutheran by faith; and he leaves us in no doubt of his existentialist standpoint. Very early Job assures The Man that he does not believe in the God of the official churches, the God of the schools, the God of whose existence the Roman Church offers its all-too familiar proofs; but that he believes in God the Father of Jesus Christ, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; that is to say, not in the God of the philosophers, but in the God of Luther and Pascal (Dr Ehrenberg has a book on Pascal in preparation). Job is made to say: "Either this God is existential or there is no God!"

All five dialogues are lively and spirited. They crackle with wit. What the author would call an existentialist form is congenial to him. But it is a form with an obvious weakness. Job converses with

his interlocutors; he does not speak directly to the reader, and the reader of this book may be left in consequence unmoved by the urgency of its theme. For that matter, it is in the remarks with which Dr Ehrenberg follows the dialogues that I have found him sometimes arresting. There he reminds us that for Chesterton "the central idea of the Old Testament is the solitude of God", and calls a booklet by Paul Claudel "the jewel of all Job literature". There he describes William Blake as "the British Magus of the North, Hamann's incomparable twin and contemporary", and recommends the I-Thou philosophy of Buber over that of Kierkegaard and Heidegger. There he speaks of the irony which is, he says, a characteristic of all lofty literature, and declares that in the Book of Job the ironist is God.

By way of postscript to this notice the opportunity should be taken of congratulating Dr Ehrenberg on having kept this summer his seventieth birthday.

MONTGOMERY BELGION.

IMAGES OF TOMORROW. By John Heath-Stubbs. S.C.M. Press. 10s. 6d.

Our seventy-one poems are very much of to-day, being with few exceptions the recent work of poets newly established or yet to be established. Indeed, Alex Comfort, Vernon Watkins, and W. R. Rodgers rank among the veterans. The significant younger writers seem "religious"; suspiciously so. Perhaps half the poems are Christian, in title or in theme, with lavishly scattered Biblical and sacramental references. Moreover, Mr Heath-Stubbs (in a lucid and wise introduction) can claim that his unusually definite pattern—namely, the grouping of the material round the great headings of the Creed—was something actually emerging from the material itself and not an arbitrary imposition from without.

Alas, it is not quite so straightforward as that. "Their engagement is characteristically with problems of human existence." But once you leave the pleasant unambitious paths of a poetry corresponding to "program music" for these misty uplands of experience, you are liable to be accused of religious writing, there being no defined frontiers. Now the anthologist has resolutely rejected "program poetry"; Norman Nicholson's "Old Main Street" begins descriptively but goes further, while "A Turn for the Better" is description intensified, transcending itself. So there remain only attitudes more or less religious; Alex Comfort is left almost alone waving the banner of a self-conscious humanism. Yet many seem to be using Christian symbols merely *faute de mieux*, as offering amid our cultural chaos, a widespread recognition, along with precision and richness of association. It would indeed be naïve to accept Rodgers' "Lent" or Margaret Willy's "Annunciation" as Christian poetry on the strength of their titles.

The Christian reader does best to suspend his solicitude over the personal faith which may or may not lie behind, say, Derek Stanford's "Peter" or G. S. Fraser's boisterous "The Black Cherub", John

Smith's admirable "Crucifixion from Afar", or even Thomas Blackburn's "Good Friday". That faith is the parish priest's concern; and whether the authors are strict party members or just "fellow-travellers" their poems stand on their own feet, commanding assent.

For an essentially youthful anthology there is a pleasing absence of rhetoric, the large gesticulation, the cosmic posturing. Eurasia Anderson's "The Masque of Sleep" is rather better than it seems at first sight, although we feel easier with Abse's delightful "Letter to *The Times*". Of the patently derivative, "Pentecost" is pure Manley Hopkins, but none the worse for that. We only wish for a larger dose of the allegedly obscure W. S. Graham.

COSELEY. D. W. FOSTER.

SHORTER NOTICES

JEWISH ETHICS. By Israel Mattuck. Hutchinson's University Library. 8s. 6d.

THE BOOK OF JOB. By Anthony and Miriam Hanson. S.C.M. Press. 7s. 6d.

Christians have commonly depreciated Jewish ethics. Dr Mattuck admits the existence of "weak spots" (p. 13) in the ethical teaching of some rabbis, but seeks to give a summary of Jewish ethics at its best both in its general principles and in their working out in social, family, and individual life. The principal sources of his study are the Old Testament, the apocryphal and extra-canonical literature, and the teaching of the rabbis of the first few centuries A.D.

Some of his opinions are questionable. Not all scholars, for example, would agree with him in doubting (p. 65) whether the *lex talionis* was ever literally applied, if the primitive period is to be included in the discussion. But on the whole the book is a well-balanced and scholarly work. Dr Mattuck writes from the point of view of a Liberal Jew but seeks to be free from sectarian bias. A Christian reader might, however, have been interested in a fuller discussion of the Jewish conception of merit, and of the principle of having a system of rules comprehensive enough to cover almost every detail of everyday life.

The commentary on Job by Mr and Mrs Hanson is intended for the general reader, not for the specialist. In the introduction critical questions are judiciously summarized. It is argued that the purpose of the book of Job is not primarily to exemplify the patience of a righteous sufferer, or to discuss the problem of suffering, but to show that "even the pure heart cannot justify a man" (p. 20), and thus to anticipate the New Testament doctrine of justification by faith. To the reviewer, however, it seems that Job's fault is not that he presumes upon his own purity, but that he presumes to speak on matters beyond his comprehension. Nor does the New Testament deny that a pure heart, if it did exist, would justify a man.

The commentary is usually helpful but is marred by examples of

unreliability and lack of precision. The notes on 13. 9 and 20. 3, for example, confuse the two parts of the verses. The revised "translations"—sometimes borrowed from Moffatt—often involve paraphrase or tacit emendation (e.g. 11. 6, 13. 15, 14. 4, 18. 13, 23. 2, 26. 2 f., 28. 4, 29. 24, 35. 2, 37. 12, 39. 24). The emendation, "I am escaped with my skin in my teeth", is as obscure as the original. The transliteration She'ol is misleading and should be replaced by the conventional She'ol.

J. A. EMERTON.

BIRMINGHAM.

WESTERN CANON LAW. By R. C. Mortimer. A. and C. Black. 7s. 6d.

The study of canon law in the Church of England received a desirable impetus through the publication in 1947 of the Report of the Archbishops' Commission together with proposals for a revised body of Canons. The subsequent debates in Convocation and Church Assembly have brought the importance of ecclesiastical law to the notice of both the clergy and laity. Yet there is no branch of theology to which it is more difficult for the Anglican student to receive introductory guidance. The beginner has been obliged to teach himself, a discouragement which has limited the number of clergymen with a working knowledge of the history and contents of the laws by which they are ruled. This has had a lamentable effect upon their attitude towards authority with regard to such matters as the conduct of public worship and their own rights and obligations. The laity have been in no better case; few of them seem to realize that their Church has rules to which they owe moral, if not legal, allegiance.

The Bishop of Exeter's valuable introduction to the study of canon law is both timely and informative. It is precisely the sort of book which has been long awaited: a short, reasonably priced, readable account of the origins and essential principles of the laws which define the organization of the Church and the privileges and duties of its members. The chapters which outline the genesis of Gratian's Corpus, Canon Law in England after the Reformation, and the basic theories upon which sound laws ecclesiastical must be founded, should be read with profit and pleasure by the clergy and the lay officers of our parish churches. For those who desire to delve deeper there is a useful and comprehensive bibliography.

HUMBERSTON. REGINALD HAW.

THE FIBRES OF FAITH. By A. Norman Rowland. Independent Press. 10s. 6d.

The quality of this book, whose first chapter is headed "The Tension between Religion and Science", is clearly described by Dr Franks in his Foreword: "without offering any absolute logical proof for religion . . . it endeavours to create *a frame of mind favourable to religious belief*" (p. 30). It does not set out to refute the sceptical arguments of a scientist so much as to build a parallel argument that ignores them.

The quality of intellectual analysis is uneven in the two sections of the book. That of the first may be illustrated by the following quotation: the Nazi leaders were "a group of men whose distinction was that they (1) interpreted man, or at any rate the German, from the standpoint of the pre-human, thus rehabilitating the savagery of jungle rights that still persists in 'Nordic' blood, and (2) proceeded to eliminate all elements of character and culture, slowly acquired from spiritual sources and moral struggle . . ." (pp. 63 f.).

The second part of the book discusses the subject of miracle. Mr Rowland's view may be illustrated by his interpretation of the stilling of the storm on the lake. "Capitulating to the menace of death (the disciples) deserted their posts, wakened their weary passenger with shouting and virtually abdicated in favour of his command. That was the turning point. Back at their jobs as crew they became equal to the situation, and in calmer waters their panic was transformed to peace. This miracle of restored manhood tells us that Christ can so change men within as to give them command over things they had dreaded before" (p. 181 f.). The miraculous element is transferred from the outer world to the inner, where its relation to natural law can be side-stepped. In certain other cases Mr Rowland suggests that natural events are regarded as miraculous through the intensity with which the divine providence is seen at work within them. In short, he refuses to discuss the blunt contradiction between "naturalistic" and "interventionist" views of miracle (p. 133).

There are no doubt people with a rigorous scientific training who are capable of spontaneously holding a rationalist view of science side by side with a poetical, intuitive picture of the universe. But I think the majority of scientists not trained to such an outlook will find Mr Rowland's arguments decidedly unsatisfying. I do not myself feel that the plain issue on miracle can be indefinitely shelved. I would, however, agree that the intangible, intuitive aspects of religious reality need to be given, for the rationalist, the emphasis that Mr Rowland places on them.

EXETER. K. G. COLLIER.

A COMPANION TO ST JOHN'S GOSPEL. By J. Stephen Hart, formerly Bishop of Wangaratta. Cambridge University Press (for Melbourne University Press). 12s. 6d.

The author of this book is convinced that in the Fourth Gospel we have the most reliable account we possess of the Incarnation of the Son of God and his mission of Redemption. The book is pleasantly written and will be read with interest and profit by people of ordinary education. It is in a very real sense a companion to St John's Gospel, for it supplies a verse by verse commentary and rightly demands reference to the text of the Bible.

In the introduction he argues that the chronology of the Fourth Gospel is to be preferred to that of St Mark. Any differences which arise between the two books are due to Mark's indifference about

chronology, whereas John is keenly interested about dates. This is emphasized so much by Bishop Hart that he works out the exact month and day of the week of the events in the first week of the Ministry. He is quite convinced that the Apostle John wrote the whole of the Gospel as we now have it, and confesses that he is weary of the arguments of those who will not accept the apostolic authorship.

In the delineation of character and the reconstruction of the gospel scenes he reveals much insight and reverent imagination. His interpretation of the conversation of the woman of Samaria at the well is fascinating and throws fresh light on the character of the woman. There are several flashes of such insight and originality. His purpose, perhaps, does not allow him to exhibit the different levels of thought which are woven into the Gospel. He does not make clear enough how much the non-historical penetrates the historical as is the case with Hoskyns' commentary. And he does not appear to accept the possibility that allusions to the sacraments can be found even in such miracles as the feeding of the five thousand. This seems to us to deprive the Fourth Gospel unnecessarily of a special relevance for the present day. If we accept the sacramental interest of the Fourth Gospel this at once links up the historic Christ with the worshipping community which has normally found Christ present in the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. It also throws a flood of light upon the Church's attitude towards history. Apart from this possible limitation, we think that the book will prove to be most valuable in helping the educated layman to appreciate the deep spiritual message of this Gospel.

HORSFORTH. E. KENNETH LEE.

A COMMENTARY ON ST PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS. By Martin Luther. Edited by P. S. Watson. James Clarke and Co. 16s. 6d.

This is a revised and completed translation based on the "Middleton" edition of the English version of 1575. Principal Watson, who supplies a scholarly preface, has for the most part reproduced the original (anonymous) sixteenth translation, but has corrected it where there were good reasons for doing so, and he has also restored a considerable number of passages which have hitherto been omitted. All earlier English editions are hereby superseded.

RESERVATION: ITS PURPOSE AND METHOD. Mowbray. 3s. 6d.

This is a new edition of a monograph originally published in 1923 as one of the "Alcuin Club Prayer Book Revision Pamphlets". To this edition there is appended a letter written by W. H. Frere in 1926 in which he argued for the hanging pyx as the best method of reserving the sacrament. The booklet contains some admirable photographic illustrations.

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